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Letter dated 25 June 2009 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Croatia in December 2008 (see annex). This assessment was prepared under my own responsibility, following consultations with other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ranko **Vilović**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 25 June 2009 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Republic of Croatia (December 2008)

Introduction

During the month of December 2008, under the presidency of Ambassador Neven Jurica, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations, the Security Council engaged in an extensive and robust programme of work. The Security Council held 35 formal meetings, with 2 resumptions, and 18 consultations of the whole to discuss African, Asian and European issues, and also held one high-level event on the thematic issue of threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, which was chaired by the President of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Stjepan Mesić.

In December 2008 the Security Council adopted 14 resolutions, 4 presidential statements and 4 statements to the press.

Africa

Burundi

On 11 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process and Minister of Defense of South Africa, H.E Mr. Charles Nqakula, in which he reported that significant progress had been made in resolving differences between the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL with respect to the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. The Chairman of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Andres Lidén, also spoke before the Council emphasizing that the sustained support of the international community and its involvement, in particular through the African Union and the Regional Initiative, as well as the close collaboration between the Council and the Commission, were essential in support of the consolidation of peace in Burundi. He recalled that the Commission's biannual review in January 2009 will provide an opportunity to review progress made thus far and should call for further international support and attention where needed. In the consultations of the whole that followed, Security Council members exchanged views on the situation in Burundi as well as on the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) (S/2008/745).

The meeting was followed by consultations of the whole on the issue.

On 22 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1858 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of BINUB until 31 December 2009.

Chad and the Central African Republic

On 12 December, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), Victor da Silva Angelo, who reported on the successful preparations for transfer of authority from the European Union to the United Nations in Chad and the Central African Republic. He informed the Council of the excellent cooperation between the European Union-led military force EUFOR, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community in preparation for the 15 March 2009 transfer deadline.

The meeting was followed by consultations of the whole on the issue.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

During its consultation on 15 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, and discussed the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the upcoming renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

On 17 December, in consultations of the whole, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, H.E. Mr. Marty M. Natalegawa, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, on the final report of the Group of Experts, and on deliberations among Committee members on the Group of Experts report at the Committee's informal consultations on 10 December.

On 22 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1856 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of MONUC until 31 December 2009, while reinforcing the Mission's strength and refocusing its mandate more clearly on the protection of civilians.

On 22 December, the Council also unanimously adopted resolution 1857 (2008), by which it renewed the Democratic Republic of the Congo sanctions regime and extended the mandate of the Group of Experts until 30 November 2009. Sanctions were expanded to target individuals impeding humanitarian assistance or supporting armed groups operating in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the illicit trade of natural resources.

Guinea-Bissau

On 11 December, the Security Council held consultations on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS). The Representative of the Secretary-General, Shola Omoregie, opened the consultations with a briefing in which he introduced the main conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General. In his intervention, he made special mention of the elections and the attempted coup (in November 2008), as well as security sector reform and the fight against illegal narcotics. Members of the Council mainly expressed their satisfaction with the successful elections, but also pointed out that the situation in the country remained fragile and, occasionally, even violent.

The Council also agreed on a press statement which was read out by the President after the meeting. In the press statement Council members welcomed the successful organization of legislative elections on 16 November 2008, reiterated their deep concern over the security situation and in this regard offered their support for the implementation of the security sector reform programme, welcomed the successful holding of the Economic Community of West African States Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa, and requested the Secretary-General to draw up recommendations on transforming UNOGBIS into an integrated office.

The situation in the Great Lakes Region (LRA-affected areas)

During its consultations on 17 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, H.E. Mr. Joaquim Chissano. Security Council members reiterated their full support for the efforts of former President Chissano and called for the continuation of his work.

On 22 December, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/48) strongly condemning the attacks by the LRA. It also commended the States in the region for their increased cooperation in addressing the security threat posed by the LRA.

Liberia

On 17 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003), Giadalla Azuz Ettalhi, Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on the implementation of sanctions in Liberia. The basis for the Chairman's briefing was the report of the Panel of Experts to the Council at the beginning of December 2008.

The Chairman of the Committee informed the Council regarding the continuation of the conditional abolishment of sanctions against Liberia. He stressed the limited capacities that States in the region have in implementing the travel ban. The Chairman pointed out that the assets freeze is not being implemented at all in Liberia owing to a lack of national legislation. On the other hand, the arms embargo is being fully implemented and there is no evidence of any significant violation of that measure.

On 19 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 1854 (2008), by which it decided to renew the arms embargo and travel ban sanctions regime in Liberia for another period of 12 months.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Chad and the Sudan)

On 3 December, the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, on his trip and insights into the humanitarian situation in Chad and the Sudan. He reported that despite some recent political steps that were taken, a ceasefire and negotiated settlement to the conflict were urgently needed. He added that banditry and criminality represented the biggest single concern for humanitarian workers.

Somalia

On 2 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1846 (2008), by which the Council decided that for a period of 12 months from its adoption States and regional organizations cooperating with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia may enter Somalia's territorial waters and use all necessary means to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, in accordance with relevant international law.

On 11 December, during consultations of the whole, the Security Council heard a briefing by Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa, in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to Council resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, on the final report of the Monitoring Group.

On 16 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1851 (2008), by which the Council decided that for a period of 12 months from the date of adoption of its resolution 1846 (2008) States and regional organizations cooperating with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia may undertake all necessary measures for the purpose of suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia that are appropriate in Somalia and consistent with applicable international humanitarian and human rights law. The Council also invited States and regional organizations to conclude special agreements or arrangements with countries willing to take custody of pirates in order to embark law enforcement officials ("*shipriders*") from the latter countries, to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of persons detained as a result of operations conducted under resolution 1851 (2008).

Following the adoption of resolution 1851 (2008), the Security Council heard a briefing by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, on the political and security situation in Somalia. The Secretary-General welcomed the Council's actions with respect to the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia but also emphasized that piracy in Somalia was a symptom of the anarchy that had persisted in the country for more than 17 years. Anti-piracy efforts, therefore, must be placed in the context of a comprehensive approach, he added. The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Dr. Ivo Sanader. Statements were made by all Council members, including the Secretary of State of the United States of America, H.E. Ms. Condoleezza Rice; the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, H.E. The Right Honourable Mr. David Miliband, M.P.; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov; the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, H.E. Mr. He Yafei, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, H.E. Mr. Yasutoshi Nishimura. Also participating at the meeting, among others, were the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, H.E. Mr. Ali Ahmed Jama Jengeli; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, H.E. Mr. Jonas Gahr Støre and the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Yahya Mahmassani.

On 19 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1853 (2008), by which it authorized the re-establishment of the Monitoring Group for a period of 12 months and added a fifth expert to handle the additional tasks it had assigned to an expanded mandate of the Group.

Sudan — UNAMID

On 19 December, the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, and the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Susana Malcorra, on the situation in Darfur, Sudan. Mr. Le Roy regretted that the progress in Darfur was much too slow in providing real benefits to ordinary citizens and inadequate in resolving the Darfur crisis, while Ms. Malcorra assured the members of the Council that, despite the volatile security environment, the full deployment of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur remains a top priority for her team.

The meeting was followed by consultations of the whole on the issue.

Peace and security in Africa

At its meeting, held in private, on 15 December, the Security Council considered the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", at which it discussed the situation in Zimbabwe. The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Dr. Ivo Sanader. The Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, made an introductory briefing. The members of the Council, including, among others, H.E. The Right Honourable Mr. David Miliband, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; H.E. Ms. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State of the United States of America; and H.E. Mr. Karel de Gucht, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, had an exchange of views on the prevalent political and social-economic situation in the country and its effects on the subregion.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 4 December, the Security Council heard a briefing by Mr. Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, Head of the Security Council Mission to Afghanistan, Permanent Representative of Italy, in which he reported that the visit of the mission took place from 21 to 28 November 2008, guided by the agreed terms of reference. The main goal of the mission was to develop a first-hand assessment of the situation in that country.

Members of the mission had the opportunity to meet with a number of actors in Afghanistan during the visit, including President Hamid Karzai, the Speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, Chairmen of the Parliamentary Committees and other Members of Parliament, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and Independent Electoral Commission, the Secretary General of NATO, and representatives of the International Security Assistance Force, members of the diplomatic community, civil society, international and national non-governmental organizations, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) senior staff and the United Nations country team.

The mission visited the province of Herat and met there with the UNAMA regional representative, the provincial governor and other officials, as well as with representatives of a Provisional Reconstruction Team, all of whom underlined the importance of quick-impact assistance projects implemented by the Herat Provisional Reconstruction Team.

Iraq/Kuwait

On 10 December, Ambassador Gennady Tarasov, the Secretary-General's High-level Coordinator for missing Kuwaitis and third-country citizens and missing Kuwaiti property, briefed the Security Council in consultations of the whole, presenting the Secretary-General's report on the issue (S/2008/761). Following the consultations, the President of the Council read out a statement to the press, noting a lack of progress on exhumation activities and on clarifying the fate of the Kuwaiti national archives, expressing appreciation for the support offered by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and noting the good intentions of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait to cooperate on the issue. The members of the Security Council undertook to continue to monitor progress and looked forward to a comprehensive report by the Secretary-General in April 2009.

Iraq (Multi-National Force — Iraq)

On 22 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1859 (2008), by which the Council decided to extend the arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the arrangements for the monitoring by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board and decided that they should be reviewed at the request of the Government of Iraq on no later that 15 June 2009. The Security Council also decided to review resolutions pertaining specifically to Iraq, beginning with resolution 661 (1990). The Security Council welcomed Iraqi Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, who gave an update on the political, security and economic situation in Iraq. A number of Council members welcomed the adoption of the resolution as a clear expression of the progress achieved by Iraq and reiterated the importance of continued international support to Iraq in addressing the remaining challenges.

Special Tribunal for Lebanon

On 4 December, in consultations of the whole, the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Patricia O'Brien, presented the Secretary-General's third report pursuant to resolution 1757 (2007) (S/2008/734) and briefed the members of the Council on steps taken by the Secretary-General towards entry into operation of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. A number of Security Council members welcomed the advanced stage of preparations and reiterated their support to the establishment of the Special Tribunal.

Lebanon (International Independent Investigation Commission)

On 17 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1852 (2008), by which the Council extended the mandate of the International Independent Investigation Commission until 28 February 2009, at the request of Commissioner Daniel Bellemare and Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora. Briefing the Council earlier on the same day, Commissioner Bellemare presented the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/752) and said that the investigation had made progress since the previous report but indicated it would continue even after the Special Tribunal was up and running on 1 March 2009. The Council also heard a statement by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, who expressed his Government's appreciation for the work of the Commission. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the members of the Security Council expressed their support for the work

of the Commission and commended Mr. Bellemare for his work as Commissioner. The members of the Council also reiterated their support to the Secretary-General's efforts for the rapid establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and his call on Member States to contribute to its financing.

Non-proliferation

In a briefing held on 10 December, the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) presented the quarterly report on the work of the Committee. Several members made statements following the presentation of the report.

The situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question

On 3 December, the Security Council held a debate to discuss the situation in connection with the Libyan ship which was headed to the Port of Gaza carrying humanitarian supplies. Members of the Council made statements. The Council also heard statements by the Permanent Observer for Palestine and the Permanent Representative of Israel. The Council did not reach any specific conclusion.

On 5 December, the Council addressed events in Hebron in consultations of the whole. Following the consultations, the President of the Council informally conveyed to the press that the members of the Council welcomed Israel's evacuation of settlers, condemned the resulting settler violence, urged respect for the rule of law without discrimination or exception and encouraged Israel and the Palestinian Authority to continue their security cooperation in the Hebron Governorate.

On 16 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 1850 (2008) by 14 votes in favour, with one abstention. The adoption was preceded by a Council debate with ministerial participation of several members and with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Ivo Sanader, chairing. The Secretary-General also addressed the Council. Reiterating the vision of the two-State solution while noting the importance of the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet's ongoing work, the Council, in resolution 1850 (2008), declared its support for the Annapolis process and the irreversibility of the negotiations. The Security Council supported the parties' agreed principles for the bilateral negotiations, called on both parties to fulfil their obligations under the Road Map and refrain from any steps that could undermine confidence or prejudice the outcome of negotiations, and called on all States and international organizations to contribute to an atmosphere conducive to negotiations and to assist the Palestinian Authority. It urged intensified diplomatic efforts to foster mutual recognition and peaceful coexistence in the region in the context of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and welcomed the consideration of an international meeting in Moscow in 2009.

On 18 December, the Security Council held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, on the situation in Gaza and the West Bank. He also addressed the situation in Lebanon and the dynamics between the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel. He said that the main objective in the coming year was to sustain the political process during a period of transition, emphasizing the importance of the adoption of resolution 1850 (2008).

He appealed for the observance of basic humanitarian principles in Gaza and warned against the escalation of violence. The Security Council then heard statements by the Permanent Observer for Palestine and the Permanent Representative of Israel. Representatives of Brazil, Cuba, Qatar, Turkey, Japan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Chile, Pakistan, Venezuela, Morocco, Norway, Australia, Iceland, and the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People also addressed the Council.

On 28 December, after consultations of the whole that had begun the previous evening following the outbreak of violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, the President of the Council read out a statement to the press, expressing serious concern at the escalation of the situation in Gaza and calling for an immediate halt to all violence, calling for all parties to address the serious humanitarian and economic needs in Gaza and stressing the need for the restoration of calm in full, which will open the way for finding a political solution.

On 31 December, the Security Council held an emergency meeting on the situation in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel. The Secretary-General addressed the Council, emphasizing profound concern that the Security Council's call for an end to the violence had gone unheeded and emphasized the suffering of the civilian population in Gaza, saying that all parties must fully uphold international humanitarian law. He stressed the need for decisive action and welcomed efforts by European and Arab leaders. The Permanent Observer for Palestine and the Permanent Representative of Israel also addressed the Council. Members of the Council made statements, followed by the representatives of Egypt and the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States.

United Nations Disengagement Force

On 10 December, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard a short briefing by the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, who presented the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) (S/2008/737). Members of the Security Council expressed support for UNDOF and for the goal of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Earlier on the same day, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNDOF.

On 12 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1848 (2008), extending the mandate of UNDOF for a period of six months, until 30 June 2009, and adopted the accompanying statement of the President (S/PRST/2008/46), in which the President of the Council, in connection with resolution 1848 (2008), was authorized to reiterate that the report of the Secretary-General on UNDOF (S/2008/737), in its paragraph 11, stated that "the situation in the Middle East is tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached", and that that statement of the Secretary-General reflected the view of the Security Council.

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

On 10 December, the Security Council held consultations on the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. The consultations opened with a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-

General for Central Asia, Miroslav Jenča. He informed the Council about the establishment (December 2007) and recent commencement of activities (June 2008) of the Centre.

He also informed the Security Council that the Centre had adopted an Action Plan 2009-2011, covering the following areas: (a) cross-border threats (terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime); (b) environmental protection and resources management, especially water and energy sources; and (c) regional consequences arising from the conflict in Afghanistan and a regional approach to the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan.

Following the consultations, the President of the Council read out an agreed press statement, in which the Council welcomed the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and welcomed the engagement by the Centre with Governments of the region and regional organizations on issues relevant to preventive diplomacy and supported the efforts of the Centre to facilitate dialogue and assist the Governments of Central Asia on regional issues of common concern.

Europe

Cyprus

On 5 December, the Security Council held a private meeting with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), at which they were briefed about the situation in Cyprus and developments relevant to the UNFICYP mandate there. Later that same day, the Security Council held closed consultations in which it discussed the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/744) of 28 November 2008. Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, who informed the Council of the good progress of the fully fledged negotiations that had been launched on 3 September and the prospect of a comprehensive and durable settlement for Cyprus that they had created.

On 12 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1847 (2008), in which it decided to extend the mandate of UNFICYP until 15 June 2009.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 5 December, the Security Council held a debate on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council was briefed by the High Representative, Miroslav Lajčak, who presented his third report on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Council. He reported on the progress that was achieved in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the signing of a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, though he noted that nationalist rhetoric threatened to dampen the momentum of positive trends. The Council also heard from H.E. Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who concluded that 2008 had been a successful year in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Subsidiary bodies

On 15 December, the Security Council held a briefing of the five outgoing Permanent Representatives in their capacities as Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Council.

Ambassador Jan Grauls of Belgium reported on the activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004), concerning Côte d'Ivoire, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), concerning non-proliferation and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Ambassador Marty Natalegawa of Indonesia reported on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 918 (1994), concerning Rwanda, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations.

Ambassador Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata of Italy reported on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), concerning the Sudan, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias of Panama reported on the activities of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters.

Ambassador Dumisani Shadrack Kumalo of South Africa reported on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), concerning Somalia, and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

Other matters

International Criminal Court

On 3 December, the Security Council held a debate and was briefed by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo, who presented his eighth report pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005), describing the extent of cooperation, as well as the investigative and monitoring activities undertaken in three Darfur cases, namely, the prosecutorial cases against Ahmad Harun and Ali Kushyab, against Omar Al Bashir and against the rebel commanders for the Haskanita attack. Members of the Security Council expressed concern regarding the climate of impunity and the ongoing violence in Darfur, which targets innocent civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian workers alike. The question of cooperation with the Government of the Sudan and all other parties to the conflict in Darfur was also raised, as well as the need for a comprehensive settlement to the conflict.

International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

On 12 December, the Council held a debate to hear a briefing on the completion strategies of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia by its President, Judge Patrick Robinson, and its Prosecutor, Serge

Brammertz, and on the completion strategies of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda by its President, Judge Dennis Byron, and its Prosecutor, Hassan Bubacar Jallow. They presented their respective assessments of the implementation of the completion strategies of the Tribunals (S/2008/729, S/2008/726). Pointing to the continuing impunity enjoyed by some leaders responsible for the gravest crimes, they emphasized that the end of the mandate of the Tribunals should not signal that those persons were safe from justice. Members of the Security Council urged the Tribunals to continue to work on completing their respective mandates as early and as expeditiously as possible, without jeopardizing the fairness of the process.

The representative of Belgium, who facilitated the work of the Security Council Informal Working Group on the International Tribunals, briefed the Council on the progress achieved by the Informal Working Group on the issue of the establishment of a residual mechanism to carry out certain essential functions of the Tribunals after the closure of the Tribunals. The representatives of Rwanda, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kenya participated in the discussion in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

On 12 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1849 (2008), authorizing the Secretary-General to appoint additional ad litem judges to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, temporarily exceeding the statutory maximum until 28 February 2009.

On 19 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1855 (2008), in which it decided that the Secretary-General may appoint up to three additional ad litem judges to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, temporarily exceeding the statutory maximum until 31 December 2009.

On 19 December, the Security Council also adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/47), in which it took note of the presentations made on 12 December 2008 by the Presidents and Prosecutors of the Tribunals. Noting with concern that the 2010 deadline was not likely to be met, the Council emphasized that trials must be conducted by the Tribunals as quickly and efficiently as possible. It reaffirmed the necessity of persons indicted by the Tribunals being brought to justice, and called on all States to intensify cooperation with the Tribunals. In that context, the Council reaffirmed that the referral of cases to competent national jurisdictions was an essential part of the completion strategies of the Tribunals. The Council expressed its appreciation for the work of its Informal Working Group on the International Tribunals. The Council acknowledged the need to establish an ad hoc mechanism to carry out a number of essential functions of the Tribunals, including the trial of high-level fugitives, after the closure of the Tribunals, which would derive its authority from a Security Council resolution and from the respective statutes and rules of procedure of the Tribunals.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 9 December, the President of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Mr. Stjepan Mesić, chaired an open debate on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. The Council was briefed by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. In advance of the meeting, Croatia had circulated a concept paper (S/2008/738, annex), focusing on revitalizing and strengthening international solidarity in combating the threat of terrorism, including the strengthening of the leading role of the United Nations in global counter-terrorism efforts.

The Secretary-General stressed that, as a leading threat to international security, terrorism had to be one of the international community's main priorities. He added that the best response to a corrosive, malevolent ideology is a strong assertion of collective resistance. The Secretary-General emphasized that the international community needs to defend the human rights that terrorism so brutally violates, and urged the defence of values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United Nations has a responsibility to lead international efforts to confront this menace. The adoption by the General Assembly of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006 was a landmark event, and United Nations mechanisms, such as the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and subsidiary bodies of the Council, were also important parts of the picture. Referring to the attacks on the United Nations offices in Baghdad, Algeria and Somalia, the Secretary-General stated that while it was more apparent than ever that the United Nations has become a deliberate target, these tragedies have deterred neither its will nor its ability to serve the international community.

Following the briefing, there were statements by 46 States, both members and non-members of the Security Council. Council members reaffirmed their commitment to pursue the struggle against terrorism, and with many speakers noting that their countries had experienced that scourge, most also agreed about the need for a revitalized and unified anti-terrorism effort and the need for a multidimensional approach. Many Council members also stressed the need for political and developmental initiatives to deal with conditions conducive to terrorism, as well as a renewed combat against money-laundering, drug trafficking and other networks that aided global terrorism.

At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/45), in which it reiterated its condemnation of terrorism in all forms and manifestations and emphasized the central role of the United Nations in the global struggle against terrorism. The Security Council welcomed recent statements made by intergovernmental organizations condemning all forms of terrorism, including suicide bombing and hostage taking. The Council reaffirmed the importance of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) and the work of the three committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004). It also emphasized the importance of technical assistance aimed at increasing the capabilities of Member States in the fight against terrorism by addressing their counter-terrorism needs.

Furthermore, the Council called on all Member States to express support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It emphasized the need to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations, condemned incitement to terrorist acts and reaffirmed the importance of countering radicalization and extremism. The Council reminded States that they must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. The Security Council called on all Member States to renew the degree of solidarity manifested immediately after the tragic event of 11 September 2001, and to redouble efforts to tackle global terrorism.